WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1.   A method of extracting related information from electronic files, each file containing a plurality of records for containing data, the method comprising:

    a)   comparing data contained in a key segment of each record of a first file to data in a related key segment of each record of a second file;

    b)   upon each occurrence of a match of data in the key segment of a record in the first file to data in the related key segment of a record in the second file, creating a record in a temporary electronic file, wherein the record in the temporary file includes data from the records of both the first and second files having matching key segment data;

    c)   selecting data from records of the temporary file; and

    d)   outputting the selected data.

2.   The method recited in claim 1, further comprising thereafter deleting the temporary file.

3.   The method recited in claim 1, further comprising:

for additional files, repeating steps a), b) and c) using an additional file as the first file and the temporary file as the second file.

4.   The method recited in claim 1, wherein the first file is stored in electronic form on magnetic tape.

5.   The method recited in claim 1, wherein the first file is stored in electronic form on media selected from a group consisting of solid state memory, magnetic disk memory, and optical memory.

6.   The method recited in claim 1, further comprising sorting the records of the first file based on data contained in the key segment.

7.   The method of claim 1, wherein a record of the temporary file created upon a match of data between records in the first and second files contains less than all of the data from the matching records of the first and second files.

8.   The method of claim 1, further comprising selecting data from the records of the temporary file based in part on logic operators.

1   9.   The method of claim 8, wherein the logic operators are selected from a

2 group consisting of less than, greater than, equal to, not-equal-to, less-than-or-equal-to,

3 greater-than-or-equal-to, in and not in.

1   10.   A system for extracting related information from electronic files,

2 comprising:

3   a processor;

4   a storage device;

5   an output device;

6   a first electronic file stored on the storage device, the first electronic file

7 containing a plurality of records for containing data; and

8   a second electronic file stored on the storage device, the second electronic file

9 containing a plurality of records for containing data;

10   wherein the processor is configured to compare data contained in a key

11 segment of each record of the first file to data in a related key segment of each record of the

12 second file;

13   wherein the processor is further configured such that upon each occurrence of

14 a match of data in the key segment of a record in the first file to data in the related key

15 segment of a record in the second file, the processor causes a record in a temporary electronic

16 file to be created, wherein the record in the temporary file includes data from the records of

17 both the first and second file having matching a key segment data; and

18   wherein the processor is further configured to select data from records of the

19 temporary file and output the data to the output device.

1   11.   The system of claim 10 wherein the processor is further configured to

2 thereafter delete the temporary file.

1   12.   The system of claim 10, wherein the first file is stored on the storage

2 device on magnetic tape.

1   13.   The system of claim 10, wherein the first file is stored on the storage

2 device on media selected from a group consisting of solid state memory, magnetic disk

3 memory, and optical memory.

1   14.   The system of claim 10, wherein the processor is further configured to

2   sort the records of the first file based on data contained in the key segment.

1   15.   The system of claim 10, wherein a record of the temporary file created

2   upon a match of data between records in the first and second files contains less than all of the

3   data from the records of the first and second files.

1   16.   The system of claim 10, wherein the processor is further configured to

2   select data from records of the temporary file based in part on logic operators.

1   17.   The system of claim 16, wherein the logic operators are selected from

2   a group consisting of less than, greater than, equal to, not-equal-to, less-than-or-equal-to,

3   greater-than-or-equal-to, in and not in.

1   18.   A computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions

2   for performing a method comprising:

3   a)   receiving instructions identifying two or more electronic files from

4   which to extract related information, each file containing a plurality of records for containing

5   data;

6   b)   receiving instructions identifying a key segment of each record of a

7   first file and a related key segment of each record of a second file;

8   c)   comparing data contained in the key segment of each record of the first

9   file to data contained in the related key segment of each record of the second file;

10   d)   upon each occurrence of a match of data in the key segment of a record

11   in the first file to data in the related key segment of a record in the second file, creating a

12   record in a temporary electronic file, wherein the record in the temporary file includes data

13   from the records of both the first and second file having matching key segment data;

14   e)   receiving instructions identifying data to be selected from the

15   temporary file;

16   f)   selecting the data from records of the temporary file; and

17   g)   outputting the data.

1   19.   The medium of claim 18, wherein the method further includes

2   thereafter deleting the temporary file.

1   20.   The medium of claim 18, wherein the method further includes:

2   for additional files, repeating steps a), b), c) and d) using an additional file as

3   the first file and the temporary file as the second file.

1   21.   The medium of claim 18, wherein the method further includes sorting

2   the records of the first file based on data contained in the key segment.

1   22.   The medium of claim 18, wherein the method further includes

2   selecting data from records of the temporary file based in part on logic operators.

1   23.   The medium of claim 22, wherein the logic operators are selected from

2   a group consisting of less than, greater than, equal to, not-equal-to, less-than-or-equal-to,

3   greater-than-or-equal-to, in and not in.

1   24.   A temporary electronic file, comprising:

2   at least one record having a plurality of data fields, wherein the data fields are

3   related to data fields of records in a first and a second electronic file, and wherein the data in

4   each record of the temporary file are identical to data in the related data fields of either the

5   first or the second file.